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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/534,036	05/06/2005	Michael Heckmeier	MERCK-3005	9696
23599	7590	05/12/2009		
MILLEN, WHITE, ZELANO & BRANIGAN, P.C. 2200 CLARENDON BLVD. SUITE 1400 ARLINGTON, VA 22201				
EXAMINER				
TRA, TUYEN Q				
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
2873				
NOTIFICATION DATE		DELIVERY MODE		
05/12/2009		ELECTRONIC		

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

docketing@mwzb.com

Office Action Summary**Application No.**

10/534,036

Applicant(s)

HECKMEIER ET AL.

Examiner

TUYEN Q. TRA

Art Unit

2873

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 16 April 2009.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-6 and 8-15 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-6 and 8-15 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/CIS)
- Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____

- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Objections

1. Claim 1 is objected to because of the following informalities:

In claim 1, line 7, recites "the optically isotropic phase" that have not been mentioned previously. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim. Appropriate correction is required.

In claim 1, line 10, examiner suggests that "(layer)" be deleted.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

2. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claim 1 recites the limitation "the mesogenic modulation medium" in line 10. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

4. Claims 1-6 and 8-15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Yamaguchi et al. (US Patent 6,266,109, of record).

With respect to claim 1, Yamaguchi et al. discloses a substrate (figure 1A, item 51), an electrode arrangement (figure 1A, item 53/54), a element (figure 3, item 3) for polarisation of the light and a modulation medium (figure 1A, item 58), wherein the light modulation element is

operated at a temperature at which the modulation medium is in the optically isotropic phase in the unaddressed state, and in that the electrode arrangement can generate an electric field having a significant component parallel to the surface of the modulation medium, and in that the light modulation element includes a solid dielectric layer (col. 11, lines 47-48) between the electrode arrangement (53/54) and a mesogenic modulation layer (col. 11, line 28 – col. 12, lines 8; col. 12, lines 46-59); wherein the optically isotropic phase is a polymer network (see column 28, lines 1-3).

With respect to claim 2, Yamaguchi et al. further discloses wherein the solid dielectric layer consists of SiO_2 , SiOX , silicon nitride or silicon carbide (col. 11, lines 47-57).

With respect to claims 3-5, Yamaguchi et al. further disclose wherein the solid dielectric layer covers at least part of the electrode structure; the solid dielectric layer essentially completely covers the corners and/or edges of the electrode structure; the solid dielectric layer essentially completely covers the electrode structure (col. 11, lines 47-57).

With respect to claim 6, Yamaguchi et al. further discloses wherein the solid dielectric layer (the insulating thin film) has a thickness of less than 90% of the layer thickness of the mesogenic modulation layer (58).

With respect to claims 8 and 10, Yamaguchi et al. further discloses wherein electro-optical light modulation element is an electro-optical display system.

With respect to claims 11-13, Yamaguchi et al. further discloses wherein electro-optical element can be used as a television screen or a computer monitor or for the display of information (col. 1, lines 9-12).

With respect to claims 14 and 15, Yamaguchi et al. further discloses wherein the electro-optical element is used for the display of video signals or digital signals.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claim 9 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yamaguchi et al. (US 6,266,109, of record), as applied to claim 8, in view of Noguchi et al. (US 7,084,849, of record).

Yamaguchi et al. discloses, as in claim 9, a substrate (figure 1A, item 51), an electrode arrangement (figure 1A, item 53/54), a element (figure 3, item 3) for polarisation of the light and a modulation medium (figure 1A, item 58), characterised in that the light modulation element is operated at a temperature at which the modulation medium is in the optically isotropic phase in the unaddressed state, and in that the electrode arrangement can generate an electric field having a significant component parallel to the surface of the mesogenic modulation medium, and in that the light modulation element includes a solid dielectric layer (col. 11, lines 47-48) between the electrode arrangement (53/54) and the mesogenic modulation layer (col. 11, line 28 – col. 12, lines 8; col. 12, lines 46-59). However, Yamaguchi et al. does not disclose the display is addressed by means of an active matrix. Noguchi et al. teaches the display is addressed by means of an active matrix (see figure 2).

It would have been obvious, therefore, at the time the invention was made to a person having skill in the art to construct the electro-optical display apparatus with such as disclosed by

Yamaguchi et al., and with the display addressed by means of an active matrix such as discloses by Noguchi et al., for purpose of individually control light modulation elements.

Conclusion

7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to TUYEN Q. TRA whose telephone number is (571)272-2343. The examiner can normally be reached on 9:30-6:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Ricky L. Mack can be reached on 571-272-2333. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Tuyen Q Tra/
Examiner, Art Unit 2873

/Ricky L. Mack/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 2873